

# Winner Submissions

**London Gonzaga – Elementary School**  
Darnestown Elementary, Grade 3, First Place

## The greatness of Kamala Harris



I believe that Kamala Harris, the USA's first Female Vice President will do great things with her time in office. I know that the President will support her. It is amazing how she always speaks her mind. She, more than anyone, deserves to be Vice President of the United States of America. Even though there is a pandemic going on I think she will help us through it and when it ends she will make things even better .

If I could speak to Kamala Harris and give her some advice I would tell her that she will do great things for people, for nature, for history, and for culture. Also no one no matter who they are or what they have to say should lower her spirit by telling her otherwise. She will do great things for the USA.

One of the issues Kamala Harris should focus on with her time in office is how a lot of people will be teleworking and so there will be empty office buildings. They could become affordable housing and can help a lot of people who need a house and can not afford it. Then more people in the US can be happy and have an actual place to call home and a place to live with their family.

Another issue Kamala Harris should work on with her time in office is how many kids are in the foster care system. Some parents may have gotten the Coronavirus and they may not be able to take care of their children. There are other reasons children are in foster care and they need a loving family. Kamala Harris can go to foster homes and help children to feel better and also go around and tell people to try and foster a child. She can also help to make the process easier and help support foster children and families.

The garbage in the ocean is caused by people putting things that need to go in the recycling in the trash and there is nowhere for it to go so it just gets dumped in the ocean. Also too much plastic is used and wasted by people everyday. That can hurt animals when they eat it and die or get sick. It can enter our food system and ruin our environment. Kamala Harris should help support scientists to help and help create new rules so that it doesn't happen again.

I am sure that Vice President Kamala Harris will try and try for our country and she will resolve many issues that will make a big difference for the better. She will inspire many people to do great things. She will make such a big difference that she will go down in history.

## Elizabeth Gilgoff – Elementary School

Burning Tree Elementary, Grade 4, Honorable Mention

### Advice for Kamala Harris

By Elizabeth Gilgoff

Growing up in the United States, I've seen a significant amount of men in elected office. That's why it means so much that Kamala Harris got elected as the Vice President. Being a woman with a lot of power in our country, I think she should address a few of these topics;

The first one is the wage gap between genders. In total for every \$819 a man makes, a woman makes only \$657, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is a giant gap. Vice President Harris should try to make the gap smaller or better yet make it disappear. Even when the woman works harder and the man works less at the same job there's still a gap. Why are we just tolerating this?

Secondly growing up going to school I see that the dress code is unfair. It sort of seems like it only applies to women. For example if a girl wears a tank top in high school she will get dress coded but if a boy does he won't. We should not be responsible for where men's eyes look. I think our Vice President should say something to the schools and change the dress code.

The third piece of advice I would give Kamala Harris is when she is in office she should fight for more women to be in office after her. Maybe a female president and a vice president. She should encourage women to put themselves out there to become our first woman president.

To conclude, I think while Kamala Harris is in office if she addressed a few of these topics we would be closer to having gender equality for all.

**Leslie Majkrzak – Middle School**  
**Rosa Parks Middle School, 6th Grade, Honorable Mention**

Dear Mrs. Vice President,

I am a 6th grader, at Rosa Parks Middle School. I enjoy learning and playing sports. I also love reading. What are some of your favorite things to do? Do you have any pets? Personally, I'm a dog person!

There are three problems you should focus on during your term as vice president. The world is a pretty amazing place, but there are many problems due to human actions. I strongly believe that the Earth is the perfect home and we are slowly destroying it. We need to take action immediately, before it's too late.

The first problem to address is endangered species. All animals are so amazing! By the way, my ultimate favorite is the panda! It is super sad that many species of animals are going extinct. What's your favorite animal? How would you feel if your favorite animal went extinct? In science class, we studied a list of endangered species that showed how close they were to extinction. It gave reasons that they were dying. The majority of reasons for animal endangerment are results of human interactions. Brilliant species are going extinct every day because of us! We can take action and make a big difference if we try hard. After all, we're the ones contributing to the issue, so we need to solve it!

Another problem I would like to bring to your attention is the issue of global warming. It's destroying our planet! Global warming is defined as a gradual increase in the overall temperature of the earth's atmosphere. The greenhouse effect is caused by increased levels of carbon dioxide and other pollutants. Humans are the main source of greenhouse gas emissions through burning fossil fuels. That's why it is important to conserve energy! That means you're not burning fossil fuels unless necessary.

Finally, the last issue to focus on is water pollution. My school STEM Club is participating in the 2020-2021 Invent the Future Challenge. My group's focus is eliminating water pollution. Our proposed invention filters the water before it enters the Chesapeake Bay. So much depends on clean water, including humans. Less than 3% of the Earth's water is freshwater. If we don't take care of this freshwater, then we have a huge problem. Besides freshwater for drinking, many living things depend on salt water too. Contaminating it is completely unfair in my opinion! Organisms don't deserve to face the

consequences caused by our actions! We need to take care of the planet, not just for our own benefit, but for the rest of the organisms in which we share this beautiful planet.

I hope you take into consideration these issues I listed above. I believe that these problems are primarily caused by human behavior. If we keep pushing these problems aside (which we are created, by the way) and saying, "Someone else will deal with it," by the time someone is brave enough to take action, it will be too late!!!

Sincerely,

Leslie Majkrzak

**Jade Trowell – Middle School**  
**Farquhar Middle School, 8th Grade, First Place**  
**“The First But Not The Last”**

Sitting by the TV screen  
Watching the new vice president walk out into the scene  
A nice white suit emerges, thought it was gonna be the same all over again  
But then....  
Out came a woman her smile to bright  
I could feel her delight  
Half the world was happy and the other sad  
But I guess I was just glad  
I know I'm insignificant but I just want to tell you  
That not everyone has the same view  
Be prepared for the hate  
But I know you will accelerate  
You've made it to the top  
Don't let others make u flop  
And now that's your on top you can fix  
What the world has caused with politics  
Please help the needy  
And discipline the greedy  
Save our black community  
You have the opportunity  
And last not to be asking for much  
But I was hoping you could touch  
The earth again  
So we can stop global warming once again  
You are paving the way for history  
So our black women don't remain a mystery  
You bring hope  
And I think your pretty dope  
You are the face of this state  
So please set the world straight  
The whole world is scared  
We were all unprepared  
Vaccines are coming out  
But some people have some doubt  
Please show them it's going to be ok  
Please hold the world back from decay  
Show the world that we can stand back to back  
No matter if we are balck  
We voted for you  
Not just because you were new  
We believe  
You can achieve  
Don't let the world make you corrupt  
Don't let people interrupt  
Keep your head up high  
I know sometimes you will want to cry  
You are the key to this lock  
So go ahead and do your walk  
My name is Jade  
And I am often portrayed as not black  
But who gets to define that  
So what i'm trying to say is  
Don't let the world make your head whiz  
Just focus on what you came where to do  
Which is help global warming, fix the politics, and help out black community , I know you can undo  
Don't worry we all believe in you  
The first but not the last dont forget it  
Because I know you wont quit

**Marika Campbell-Blue – High School**  
Montgomery Blair High School, 11th grade, First Place

Vice President Harris,

I know you have already hit the ground running, but I'd like to take this opportunity to address some topics that we high schoolers are concerned with: Health, Wealth, and Stealth.

Please don't make us stress about healthcare like our parents have had to. My family lost everything when my mom got cancer. She couldn't work, and we were forced to fall deeper into debt just to stay alive. Our wealth should not determine our health; a broken leg should not break the bank, and slip on ice should not slip us into poverty. Our jobs will be different from our parents, and we need the freedom to start our own businesses, change jobs, or even just exist without the ever-looming threat of financial ruin that we have now.

We can't build multi-generational wealth and investment if we are weighed down by monstrous student loan debt. Every single benefit we work for will be soaked up by mega banking institutions who toss thousands of dollars at us because we want an education. Please help us build our wealth, and invest in our promise to do more business, create arts organizations, or even make the next popular app.

Help us protect ourselves from big tech. My generation grew up on the internet; some of our first interactions with the outside world being through Instagram, Twitter, Discord, Snapchat, and so on. We love it, but every step we have taken has been documented and streamed for the relatives that live elsewhere. Our phone locations are tracked. We're monitored on our school buses and in lunchrooms. We don't have the privacy that is so confidently emphasized to us by the same people who sell our names to advertisers for a couple cents. We need space to make mistakes privately. Wear something we regret, or date the wrong person. We need your help to make our lives more secure, and have autonomy over the details of our lives.

There will always be more work that has to be done. That's just what comes with being human and becoming better. These concerns might take a backseat compared to other, more pressing issues, but I believe that creating solutions and putting our fallen pieces together is a good start. Help us to create, build, and strengthen our faith in the social contract so that we all may move forward, together.

**Mariana Ortiz – High School**  
Northwood HS, Grade 9, Honorable Mention

The crowd begins to talk,  
The door closed and opportunity perished,  
But we will continue to walk,  
As a woman walked through, her name Kamala Harris.

One who created a Historical Moment,  
Soon to be faced by the male opponent.

Advocates amplifying our success,  
Take us out of this numbness,  
Pay equity, Livable wages,  
We want Economic Justice.

1 out of 6 women are raped everyday,  
Violence motivated by gender,  
For women have become men's prey,  
And our vessels are broken for their pleasure,  
It is every 72 seconds a man is cheered for sharing,  
But a woman is asked "What were you wearing?"  
We want to feel safe, our system is corrupted,  
Safety for our bodies, we want justice.

Women have become a back bone for America,  
A place created to now suffer,  
Women attaining rising positions everyday,  
But hated for their skin color,  
Women who fight the barriers for equality,  
As our nation is destructive,  
Since the 1960's we've wanted,  
And still want, Racial Justice.



Dinah Rokach – Adult

First Place

Madam Vice President:

I am here to tell ya  
A heartbeat away's not  
Your raison d'être.

Over the Upper House  
As you sit presiding  
Or in your official  
Home with Doug residing,

Don't fall prey to glamour,  
Vogue glitzy cover shoots,  
Attired to the nines  
Or in Timberland boots.

Study policy in  
Depth and aim to be wise.  
Your time in the spotlight  
Is short. Don't temporize.

Use your brains to the max.  
Flaunt your intelligence.  
Quote position papers.  
Show mental resilience.

Apply your knowledge with  
Kindness and compassion.  
Not pie-in-the-sky dreams  
But practical action.

Executive orders  
And new legislation --  
Keep a wary eye on  
Their implementation.

Be sure in the real world,  
When effects are rated,  
Actual results are  
As anticipated.

History will record  
Of your years as VP --  
Kamala Harris led  
With smarts and empathy.

-- *Dinah Rokach*

Judy Jenkins – Adult

Honorable Mention

Dear Future Grand-Daughter,

You have not even been conceived, but that doesn't mean you cannot be imagined. My imagination takes me back in time to help you understand the Journey of Womanhood that you will embark upon one day. Your journey will be much different than women who came before you. Opportunities await your arrival that women years ago only dreamed about being a reality. As difficult as it might seem to believe, there was a time when your gender couldn't serve on a jury, own a credit card, run the Boston Marathon, attend Ivy League schools, serve in the military, and much more. The strength and vigor of women who lived in generations before you were willing to speak up and speak out. Their combined voices echoed the injustices and their never-ending persistence started to crack windows and eventually open doors.

Fast forward to 2021, our nation swore in Kamala Harris as the first-ever female vice president. Exciting times for women and exciting times for you. VP Harris has been swamped with suggestions, recommendations, and opinions about what she should and shouldn't do. It seems very simple to me. Always retain that which makes you unique - your womanhood. That uniqueness will be different for all women and it won't look the same for any two women. The gifts packaged into womanhood come in many forms such as leadership, curiosity, intelligence, courage, humor, and many more. Find that gift and embrace it always. My hope is that our current VP will devote time to several issues connected to women - connected to you. One issue is supporting all women with any identity issues. Some women think they must compete with men, think like men, behave like men ~ I hope VP Harris can develop programs that recognize how special women are and how irreplaceable they are. Secondly, my wish for VP Harris is to serve as a strong role model for all women so that women from all cultures, nationalities, and races will draw their strength from you. Finally, my last piece of advice for VP Harris is to continue to wear those Converse and proudly sport them.

Dear Little One, I know when you arrive sometime in the future life will continue to present issues especially for women. Remember the journey of womanhood comes with gifts. Find your gifts and never be afraid to embrace them. Don't be silenced when you witness things that need change. Always flaunt what makes you a woman ~ the world needs it!

Love,

Grammy

**Alysia Donohue – Adult**  
**Honorable Mention**

Dear Madam Vice President,

My greatest advice to you is to be unapologetic in your pursuit to fulfill your role in office. As the first woman to hold this position, you are setting a precedent for women who will come after you. Please do not attempt to shrink yourself by being who others expect you to be, but rather take on this role in your own way.

Now is your time to support other women. Create a national female empowerment program where girls and women can support one another in their communities to identify their strengths and turn them into action. The mission statement should be as follows: As women we have united to uplift one another, celebrate one another's accomplishments, and prove to one another we have the skills to be successful leaders. This program has been inspired by the overwhelming number of women who do not believe they have the strengths of a leader, the abundance of women exhibiting jealousy in others successes, and the lack of confidence from women to be initiators of change. I want every young girl in this country to see you and know that she can be President, or she can own a business, or she can care for her family and that each of these dreams are admirable, worthy of celebration, and achievable.

Listen to voices that have been historically ignored and silenced in this country. As a woman of color, you know firsthand the oppression and silencing that people of color face. Listen to every person regardless of gender, religion, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Recognize the humanity of these individuals, and support laws that will protect their human rights. Additionally, make an effort to get to know activists fighting for rights for people in these groups, to understand their plight, and advance their goals. Did you know that the youth population most at risk for losing their lives to suicide is transgender youth? Or that same sex couples are very successful adoptive parents, and create homes full of love and happiness for their children?

These groups advocate for themselves relentlessly but are so often misunderstood or shaped as harmful for their way of life.

Finally, it is your duty as a former Attorney General to enact reform to the justice system in this country. These systems have been built out of Jim Crow and continue to disproportionately punish people of color. You are in a position to create change within these systems, to advocate for those on death row, to release those who remain imprisoned for minor crimes such as drug possession and instead offer them support for addiction. There are successful rehabilitative practices. On reservations in this country, tribes practice rehabilitative justice and can be a model for alterations to our current system. Utilize your experience and expertise for good.

I wish you all the best in your fulfillment of this role.

Sincerely,

A Woman With Dreams of Her Own